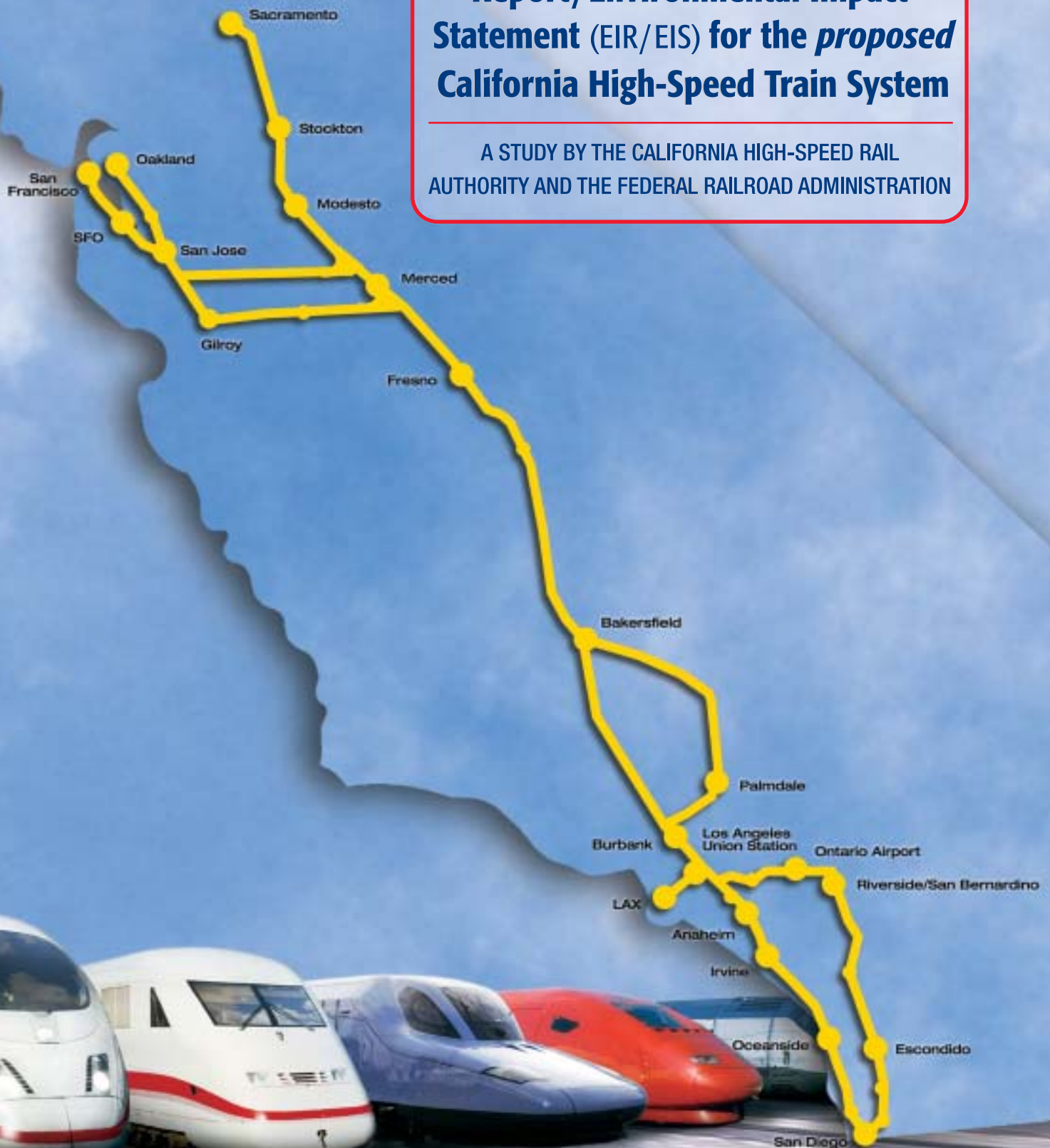


Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the *proposed* California High-Speed Train System

A STUDY BY THE CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL
AUTHORITY AND THE FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION




California High-Speed Train


Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement

Pursuant to:

California Environmental Quality Act, P.R.C. 21000 *et seq.*; State of California CEQA Guidelines, California Administrative Code, 15000 *et seq.*; and National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332 [2][c]), 23 C.F.R. Part 771 and 64 Fed. Reg. 28545

Prepared by the
California High Speed Rail Authority
and the
Federal Railroad Administration
with Cooperating Agencies:
Environmental Protection Agency
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration
Federal Aviation Administration
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers


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Date: 1/16/2004

Date: JAN 20 2004

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Abstract: This document describes and summarizes the environmental impacts of a proposed high-speed train system for intercity travel in California and alternatives that connect the major metropolitan areas of the state from Sacramento, Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose, through Stockton, Modesto, Merced, Fresno, and Bakersfield, to Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Diego. Three alternatives are considered: 1) No Project Alternative; 2) Modal Alternative (a combination of potential improvements to existing highway and air transportation facilities); and 3) High-Speed Train Alternative (a steel-wheel-on-steel-rail high-speed train system and stations). The need to improve California's transportation infrastructure is directly related to the population growth and increased intercity travel demand expected over the next 20 years and beyond, and the increased travel delays and congestion that would result for California's highways and airports. The high-speed train system analyzed would be about 700 miles (1,127 km) long and would be capable of speeds in excess of 200 miles per hour (322 kph) on tracks that are mostly dedicated, fully grade-separated, and fenced. The Modal Alternative analyzed would include adding over 2,970 lane miles (4,780 lane km) to existing highways and 60 gates and five runways to existing California airports. Potential environmental impacts of the alternatives include displacement of commercial and residential properties; community and neighborhood disruption; increased noise and vibration; local traffic impacts associated with stations; impacts on historic properties and archaeological sites; impacts on parks and recreation resources; visual impacts in scenic areas of the state; impacts on sensitive biological resources and wetlands; use of energy; and impacts on agricultural lands. Mitigation strategies are described to avoid or minimize potential impacts; such strategies would be further refined in project-level environmental review. The preferred system alternative is the High-Speed Train Alternative.

Comments on this Program EIR/EIS are due by May 13, 2004, and should be sent to the California High Speed Rail Authority at the above address. Public hearings will be held in major cities throughout the state. Locations and times will be posted on the Authority's Web site (www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov), and notice will be mailed to interested parties and published in newspapers of general circulation.

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